DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 483 009 PS 031 022

TITLE	Developmentally Appropriate School-Family Partnerships for Adolescents.
INSTITUTION	Temple Univ., Philadelphia, PA.
SPONS AGENCY	Institute of Education Sciences (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO	No-2
PUB DATE	2003-00-00
NOTE	22p.
AVAILABLE FROM	ED Pubs, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Tel: 877-433-7827 (Toll Free); Fax: 301-470-1244; e-mail: edpubs@inet.ed.gov; Web site: http://nces.ed.gov.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adolescents; Partnerships in Education

ABSTRACT

This report discusses the importance of school-family partnership strategies and practices that enable schools to work together to benefit all children. It refers to several studies that had positive outcomes. It also defines school-family partnerships and explains the benefits of such partnerships. (AMT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original document.

Ps AATR 0489

ED 483 009

Developmentally Appropriate School–Family Partnerships for Adolescents

by

Rebecca DuLaney Beyer, Eva N. Patrikakou, and Roger P. Weissberg

University of Illinois at Chicago

2003
Publication Series No. 2

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PS 031022

This research was supported in part by the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education through a grant to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory, the Laboratory for Student Success (LSS) at Temple University. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the position of the supporting agencies, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Developmentally Appropriate School–Family Partnerships for Adolescents

Rebecca DuLaney Beyer, Eva N. Patrikakou, and Roger P. Weissberg

Family and school are the two settings where children spend the majority of their time. The more supportive links there are between these two important settings, the more potential there is for healthy development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). When schools and families work closely and cooperatively, children benefit (Epstein, 1986). Therefore, research on school–family partnership strategies and practices that enable families and schools to work together to benefit all children is vitally important.

A multitude of research studies on school–family partnerships and elementary school students indicate a variety of positive outcomes. Empirical studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between multiple types of parent involvement and child outcomes such as increased academic success and improved social, emotional, and behavioral skills (Epstein, 1995; Henderson & Berla, 1994). In both experimental and correlational studies, parent involvement at home and at school have been demonstrated to have a positive effect on student learning and academic achievement (Bulach, Malone, & Castleman, 1995; Epstein, 1991; Walberg, 1984b). School–family partnerships are necessary to promote and increase that involvement so that both teachers and parents can be as effective as possible in their efforts to help children succeed (Walberg, 1984a).

These positive effects are evident throughout elementary and secondary school, although Thorkildsen and Stein (1998) conclude from a review of the literature that a general theme across studies was that when parents are involved in their children's education, it is more beneficial to the academic achievement of younger students than of older students. As children move into middle and high school, parent and teacher practices change, and the outcomes for children are less consistent. According to Zill and Nord (1994), the number of parents who report being highly involved in their children's education drops from 42% for 3rd through 5th graders to 24% for 6th through 12th graders. Dauber and Epstein (1993) also report a decline in involvement from elementary to middle and high

school. A number of factors can help explain this decline. For example, middle and high school are structurally more complicated and academically more difficult than elementary school. Additionally, as children become adolescents, their needs and wants concerning their parents' involvement change. Finally, differences in parents' and teachers' perceptions about their own abilities and about each other's attitudes influence their practices.

After providing a brief definition of school–family partnerships, this paper[1] will review the existing literature to describe more thoroughly the changes in school–family partnership practices and outcomes between elementary school and middle and high school and will examine the explanatory factors for these findings. Additionally, effective strategies for schools and families will be suggested, and recommendations for future research and policymaking will be made.

A Definition of School–Family Partnerships

The concept of school–family partnerships is multidimensional. There are many ways to define what these partnerships are and what they can and should be. As the name implies, school–family partnerships involve families working together *with* teachers and schools in ways that build positive relationships and benefit students. Many practices constitute school–family partnerships, because families and schools can engage in a wide variety of activities that directly and indirectly benefit children academically and otherwise. Epstein (1995) has developed a useful system to categorize partnership activities into six specific types:

- *Parenting*: providing for the basic needs of the child and setting limits.
- *Communicating*: parents and schools sharing information about the child and his or her education.
- *Volunteering*: parents helping in the classroom and with school activities like fundraisers.

[1] A version of this article was presented as a paper, *School–Family Partnerships for Adolescents*, by R. D. Beyer, E. N. Patrikakou, and R. P. Weissberg, December 2002, at a national invitational conference of the Laboratory for Student Success at Temple University, entitled School–Family Partnerships: Promoting the Social, Emotional, and Academic

- *Learning at Home*: activities done at home to aid the child's learning and academic success.
- *Decision Making*: being involved in the decisions made concerning the school in all areas, including school improvement, curriculum, and personnel.
- *Collaborating With Community*: involving the community and its resources in the school.

Some of these activities involve the parent working directly with the child for the sole benefit of the child; other activities, such as collaborating with the community, can benefit the school as a whole, which could ultimately be beneficial to individual children. These categories can apply to partnerships for students of all ages, although the specific practices used and the frequency with which they are used may change as children get older.

School–Family Partnerships for Middle- and High-School Students

Parent involvement, such as parent–teacher contact, involvement at the school, and involvement in education at home, is significantly lower in secondary schools than in elementary schools (Dauber & Epstein, 1993; Epstein & Lee, 1995; Hickman, Greenwood, & Miller, 1995; Zill & Nord, 1994). An analysis of the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) conducted by Epstein and Lee shows the following results:

- 92% of parents report that they have rules about homework, and 73% report rules about grades.
- 80% of families report that they talk regularly about school with their child.

However, further involvement is lower:

- 45% report that the school never contacts them about their child's academic performance, and 60% of families report that the school never contacts them for information about the student or family for school records. 48% report that they do not

Growth of Children, Washington, DC. Copyright 2002 by the Laboratory for Student Success. Adapted with permission.

contact the school.

- 70% say they have never been asked to volunteer at the school, and 80% have never volunteered.
- 56% never, seldom, or infrequently help with homework.
- 46% of parents neither belong to nor attend parent organizations or activities.

These statistics give cause for concern, because for adolescents, school–family partnerships are important in helping them succeed academically. Additionally, adolescence is a critical time for social and emotional development (Elias, Tobias, & Friedlander, 2000), and partnerships can have benefits for these outcomes as well. One of the largest sources of data on parent involvement at the middle-school level is NELS:88, which shows results of surveys administered to a national sample of more than 24,000 eighth graders and more than 20,000 of their parents. The surveys asked about various personal and school-related issues such as their family background, home environment, future plans, and school activities. Academic achievement was measured through grades and the use of a standardized test score covering reading, math, history, and science. Overall, the findings indicate that parent involvement is positively related to academic achievement in middle school, but one must look at the details to get a sense of the real picture. Ho Sui-Chu and Willms (1996) found home discussion and school participation to be positively related to reading and math achievement, and McNeal (1999) found parent–child discussion to be consistently related to decreased truancy and dropping out.

Another analysis found that parents who hold high academic expectations for their children and convey those expectations have children who also hold high expectations and aspirations for themselves (Patrikakou, 1997). In one of few studies to use data from the base-year NELS:88 survey as well as the first follow-up survey 2 years later, it was demonstrated that 8th-grade measures of parent involvement had a strong effect on 10th-grade GPA (Keith, Keith, Sperduto, Santillo, & Killings, 1998). In this case, parent involvement was measured by parent and student reports of

parent aspirations for students and parent–student discussions concerning school and school-related issues. Many of the positive benefits were related to parent–child discussion and general parental support of students, rather than to direct academic help or involvement in the school.

Other than the NELS:88 data set, only a few comprehensive studies of parent involvement in the middle grades link parent activities to outcomes. In a study of parent involvement in their fifth and sixth graders' homework, children whose parents were involved in or monitored their homework and understood their child's preferred homework style had more positive attitudes toward homework (Perkins & Milgram, 1996). In another study, an intervention focusing on math homework and family involvement showed that although prompting family involvement on the homework assignments did lead to higher levels of involvement than not prompting, there were no differences in achievement on a test of the math skills taught over the course of the intervention (Balli, Demo, & Wedman, 1998). However, follow-up interviews with parents suggested two things. First, parent involvement may have other benefits besides academic achievement, such as supporting relationships between parents and their children. Second, equally as important as increasing parent involvement is focusing on the quality of the involvement. Parents may not be able to help with academic material, but they can still support their children's academic success in other ways.

Explanatory Factors of School–Family Partnerships for Adolescents

With evidence that partnerships can be beneficial for adolescents, it is important both to understand the changes that occur as children get older and to develop strategies for effective partnerships. There are several factors related to parent involvement that might help explain current partnership practices for middle-grade students. The first factor pertains to issues of adolescent development. There is much to be read about adolescent development and parenting adolescents, but little that specifically looks at how these issues affect parent involvement at this age. Most obviously, as children grow older, their schoolwork becomes increasingly difficult. This makes it more difficult for parents to help directly with schoolwork. Without direction and support from teachers, some

parents may resort to other means of being involved in their child's education or simply give up altogether. Furthermore, the structure of most middle and high schools does not lend itself easily to partnership practices. Each teacher has more students than an elementary teacher, and each student has more teachers than in elementary school. This makes it difficult, although not impossible, for both teachers and parents to communicate effectively. As a result, regular contact and communication between parents and teachers does decline at the middle- and high-school levels (Epstein & Lee, 1995).

As they get older, adolescents also begin to seek more autonomy (Eccles, 1999). Parents may respond by decreasing their involvement, but that may not necessarily be what the adolescents want. Rather, they may want different help from their parents. One study found that adolescents do not want their parents to be visible (i.e., at the school) or intrusive (e.g., helping with homework) but that they still want their parents to remain involved in their lives (Baker, 2001). The perceptions and attitudes of adolescents are important to consider in developing partnerships. An analysis of NELS:88 data revealed that student perceptions of involvement mattered more for achievement than did parent perceptions (Desimone, 1999). In a follow-up of the study by Balli et al. (1998) described above, Balli (1998) gave the sixth graders who participated in the intervention brief surveys asking what the students thought of the involvement. When asked if they enjoyed working with their parents on homework assignments, those students who felt that their parents were actually able to help and to do so with a positive affect reported that they did enjoy the assignment (38%). But when parents confused or could not help the student, or when the interactions were not pleasant, the students had mixed feelings (52%). Additionally, when asked if they felt they did better in school when they had their parents' help, most students answered "yes" if the parents were able to help the students complete the assignment or better understand the material (62%). However, when parents confused the students or contradicted what they learned in school, students did not always believe that the involvement was helpful (34%). This study is important in that it shows that the quality of

involvement and the student's opinion are important components of effective parent involvement. If the student does not feel that the involvement is appropriate or helpful, it may not be well received, which may negate any potential benefit of the involvement.

Individual parent and teacher factors are also clearly important in developing partnerships. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) have provided a model of parent involvement which focuses on three factors specific to parents: construction of the parental role as it relates to the child's education; sense of efficacy for helping the child succeed in school; and perceived opportunities and demands for involvement from teachers and the child. Eccles and Harold (1993) also include these factors as central in their model of school–family partnerships for adolescents. Additionally, they include teacher beliefs and perceptions, such as role construction, sense of efficacy, and perceptions of parents' beliefs, as equally important. These factors can apply to partnerships for students of all ages, but they have a specific significance at the middle- and high-school levels.

The first factor, role construction, has been shown to be related to parent involvement (Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey & Jones, 1997). How parents construct their role in their child's education will influence the way they are involved. According to Hoover-Dempsey, a parent's role construction can be (a) parent-focused with the parent primarily responsible for the student's success, (b) school-focused with the school primarily responsible, or (c) partnership-focused with both parties sharing responsibility. Additionally, parents or teachers may feel that as adolescents mature, they should begin to take responsibility for themselves. That adds a fourth possibility: student-focused role construction. After elementary school, many parents are not as proactive and positive in their involvement and primarily get involved when there is a problem (Epstein & Lee, 1995; Thorkildsen & Stein, 1998). For some, this may reflect a shift in their belief about their role in their adolescent's education from their belief during the child's elementary-school years. Others may not ever have played an active role, and yet others may want to continue to be involved but may be unsure as to what role they should play. Most likely, there are some parents in

each group. Understanding the motivation behind parents' decisions about how to be involved can help in developing effective strategies.

How teachers construct their role in school–family partnerships is also important. Like parents, teachers are likely to vary in their beliefs about partnerships for adolescents, with attitudes ranging from thinking parents should be less involved as their children get older to thinking that partnerships are still important for optimal adolescent development. Again, understanding beliefs about partnerships before trying to change practices is important in order to develop effective partnerships.

The second factor, sense of efficacy, has been shown to be related to parent involvement (Grolnick et al., 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992). This may be one of the most important aspects of developmentally appropriate school–family partnerships for middle-grade students, because if parents do not feel that they have much influence or that they do not know how to use it, their involvement in their child's education will decline over the years. Most parents report that rearing an adolescent can be difficult at least some of the time (Elias, Tobias, & Friedlander, 2000). Part of this may be due to the perception that their influence is decreasing as their child is progressing into adolescence (Freedman-Doan, Arbreton, Harold, & Eccles, 1993). Parents must deal with their child's increasing need for autonomy as well as the increasing influence of peers. At the same time, as children move into middle and high school, the structure of their classes changes. For most schools, this means that children go from having one primary teacher to having a different teacher for each major subject. This can be confusing for parents, who may not know which teacher to turn to when a problem arises. Or they may feel there are too many teachers with whom to develop relationships. Not only does the structure change, but the schoolwork and homework become more difficult, making it a struggle for many parents to be able to assist their children academically.

Sense of efficacy has also been shown to be important to teacher practices. Many teachers do not get training in involving parents. This lack of training may result in the feeling that they lack the

ability to involve parents successfully. Middle- and high-school teachers have many more families to deal with than do elementary-school teachers, making it more difficult to maintain regular contact with all families. There is evidence that teachers who feel less efficacious in their ability to involve parents have lower levels of involvement with the parents of students they teach (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1987). Teachers with more students may feel less efficacious in their ability to work effectively with these children than teachers with fewer students, which could contribute to the decrease in the level of parent involvement as children move from elementary to middle and high school.

The third factor, perceived opportunities and demands for involvement, is directly related to how much parents are involved. When parents perceive that teachers are making an effort to involve them by using active and concrete strategies, they are more involved (Patrikakou & Weissberg, 2000). Parents who perceive that the teacher is making an effort also rate those teachers more highly than teachers who do not make the effort (Epstein, 1984). However, the model developed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) goes a step further to suggest that what the child does is important as well. This is especially significant at the middle- and high-school levels because children are entering adolescence, when they are seeking more autonomy from their parents (Eccles, 1999). Therefore, they may be less likely in middle and high school than in elementary school to seek, encourage, or welcome their parent's involvement in their education. However, as indicated earlier, they may continue to appreciate certain kinds of involvement, such as support for academic success at home, and not others, such as volunteering in the classroom.

Similarly, whether or not teachers perceive that parents want to be involved is important. Over half of middle-school teachers surveyed believe parents of middle-grade students do not want to be involved (Pelco & Ries, 1999). How likely are teachers to attempt to involve parents if they believe this to be true? Yet when teachers use fewer strategies to involve them, parents perceive this and may not be as involved. When parents are not as involved, teachers think they do not *want* to be

involved and may use fewer strategies. This effect may be magnified at the middle- and high-school levels as it gets more difficult for many parents to stay involved in their adolescents' lives. Interrupting this cycle is an important step in developing partnerships for adolescents.

All of the factors discussed above are important in determining whether or not parents are involved in their adolescent's education. The literature supports the influence of these factors, but there needs to be more research specific to early adolescents in middle school and their parents to examine how the factors apply. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1997) assert that parent involvement must be developmentally appropriate in order to benefit the child. To create partnerships appropriate for middle- and high-school students, parents, teachers, and students must be asked about their ideas and experiences so we can understand what they want to contribute and what they hope to gain from school–family partnerships.

Effective Strategies

Despite the increasing difficulties in creating school–family partnerships for middle- and high-school students, it is possible to do so effectively. The foundation must be laid early, even before students enter middle school. If parents are familiar with the new structure they will be encountering, the task of being involved may be less daunting.

One middle school has a partnership committee that first met with parents and teachers at both the elementary- and middle-school levels to find out what concerns students and their families might have during the transition to middle school. Using this information, the committee initiated a host of activities, including a letter exchange between elementary- and middle-school students, a panel discussion of middle-school students for those about to enter middle school, parent meetings, and family visits to the school (Salinas & Jansorn, 2000). Such activities can help ease parents into the new environment so that they are more likely to feel comfortable interacting with the school and the teachers.

As children enter middle school and adolescence, parents are often concerned not only about

academic issues, but also about the healthy social and emotional development of their children. Schools have the resources to help parents with these issues. One middle school hosts a tea with the principal each month, and parents are mailed personalized invitations. The events rotate between sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade parents and cover issues relevant at the time such as testing, school safety, and parenting issues (Salinas & Jansorn, 2000). Working with parents on a variety of important issues allows them to be involved and helpful in many ways, which is especially important at a time when schoolwork is getting increasingly difficult for both the child and the parent.

Another concern at the middle- and high-school levels is that adolescents are seeking more independence yet continue to need the support of adults, including their families. Involving students in partnerships is important, because they clearly have their own ideas about this subject, and their perceptions matter. One middle school involves the whole family through a Together Everyone Achieves More (TEAM) program. The program sponsors have family fun night once a month, GED classes for adults, workshops for parents, cultural enrichment activities for the entire family, and family counseling. The school reports that this team approach has led to more students and their families becoming involved in TEAM (Salinas & Jansorn, 2000).

These examples show that involving parents at the middle- and high-school levels is not only possible but that it can also be relatively simple. These programs have no formal evaluation, but few school–family partnership programs do. However, some have been evaluated, for example by Epstein and colleagues. They have developed an action-team approach to school–family partnerships at the middle- and high-school levels. Their approach gives schools structure and guidance in how to improve partnership activities, while it allows flexibility and variation for each school to develop the practices that are most important or useful to them. The work of the action team entails families, school personnel, and community members collaborating regularly and taking equal responsibility for the school. The team creates and carries out a plan to increase all six types of partnership activities (Epstein, 1995). The work is ongoing, not a one-time effort. Sanders and Epstein (2000) have

evaluated this approach at two middle and two high schools. Through interviewing action team members at each of the four schools, they found that progress comes in incremental steps, sometimes slowly, and that there is always room for improvement. However, the action teams helped the schools and families organize their partnership efforts so that progress could be made each year. The lessons to be learned from this approach are that both schools and families should be fully included in partnership efforts and that these efforts should be systematic and ongoing, because change takes time.

Another program that can be used successfully with middle- and high-school students is Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS). Developed by Epstein and colleagues (Epstein, 1992), TIPS recognizes that once students reach the middle- and high-school levels, parents often feel that they cannot help with homework, because it is getting more difficult. Therefore, TIPS does not require parents to teach skills, but asks students to share their work with a family member and allow families to comment and request other information from teachers. This way, all families can become involved, not just those who can help with particular subject matter. One of the advantages of TIPS is that it can be used with any curriculum, so teachers do not have to change what they are teaching; they can incorporate TIPS right into their lessons.

Another program that has been used with students of all grades is Families and Schools Together (FAST), a family-support program designed to enhance social capital by creating opportunities to increase and improve interactions between families and schools, parents and children, parents and other parents, and children and schools. Each session is 8 weeks long and includes multiple families. The sessions include sharing of meals, group discussion, separate adult and child activities, one-to-one activities for parents and children, and exercises in listening and communication. The program reports improved behavior at home and school for the students whose families have participated (McDonald, Billingham, Conrad, Morgan, & Payton, 1997).

Although only a few programs have been formally evaluated and have disseminated those

findings, there are many practices at the middle- and high-school levels that hold promise for improving school–family partnerships and the associated outcomes. Designing effective programs and practices requires understanding what activities benefit middle and high schoolers most and in what ways, and then developing ways to implement those activities with maximal parent participation.

Future Research and Practice Recommendations

Although there are gaps in the research, there is strong evidence that school–family partnerships are beneficial to students of all ages. When schools and families work together, adolescents benefit not only academically but also socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. These partnerships are critical as children begin to face the developmental challenges of adolescence that can lead either to healthy growth or to risky behaviors as they enter a critical time in their academic careers. Adolescents need the help of supportive teachers and parents to ensure that they succeed academically, socially, and emotionally.

However, more research is needed to understand what developmentally appropriate school–family partnerships should look like for adolescents. Much of the existing research is correlational, and studies have looked at such a wide variety of variables and outcomes that it is difficult to decipher which specific activities lead to which outcomes. We can build on the existing literature and expand research initiatives in the following ways:

- *More experimental studies.* Only a handful of studies actually use interventions with experimental and control groups. Although difficult and time-consuming, they provide valuable insight into what types of partnership activities are most helpful and what outcomes are produced. Balli (1998) and Balli, Demo, and Wedman (1998) demonstrated that having parent involvement in math homework is only helpful academically if the parent is actually able to help. However, participant comments also suggested, as we have seen, that there might be nonacademic benefits to the

involvement, such as strengthening the relationship between student and parent. Therefore, it is important to consider involvement in academic and nonacademic activities and to look at both academic and nonacademic outcomes for all partnership activities.

- *More longitudinal research.* Very few studies examine involvement and its effects across time. Although time-consuming and expensive, longitudinal studies will provide us with reliable evidence for the long-lasting effects of involvement on student achievement and social and emotional adjustment. In this way, benefits from parent involvement will be traced more accurately and garner more support at all levels for school–family partnership efforts.
- *Evaluation of existing programs.* There are numerous ongoing school–family partnership efforts in middle and high schools across the country. Although most have the support of school personnel and parents, few have empirical support for their effectiveness. Program evaluation is critical to ensure the effectiveness of such programs and to guide schools to maximize the benefits for all students.
- *Research on student perceptions.* The lack of investigation of student perceptions creates a very significant research gap. As children enter adolescence, they begin to assert their independence from parents and develop their own opinions and ideas about a variety of issues, including school and their parents' involvement in it. Although some studies ask students about parent involvement, few actually ask students how they feel about that involvement and what the "ideal" parent involvement would look like. Balli's study (1998) showed that middle-school students do assess the helpfulness of their parents' involvement and that it matters to them. For adolescents, it is critical that effective school–family partnerships include the students. By examining the student perspective, we will be able to define roles that students can play in establishing and maintaining

meaningful home–school relationships.

Empirical evidence will also provide the basis necessary to increase support at the practice and policy levels. Although certain federal and state initiatives target parent involvement in general, school–family partnerships in secondary schools have not been emphasized. The following points suggest ways to create a practice-oriented framework that can support systematic school efforts to increase parent participation in middle and high school.

- *Coordinated efforts.* In middle and high school, most students have four or more teachers at a time, making it difficult, as indicated earlier, for parents to communicate meaningfully with all of their child's teachers. Schools need to have a coordinated plan for teachers to communicate effectively and consistently with all parents, not just those whose children are having trouble. Where possible, a school–family partnership coordinator or action team is an excellent way to facilitate communication and coordinate efforts throughout the school (Sanders & Epstein, 2000).
- *Teacher training and support.* At all levels of schooling, teachers often lack sufficient training in working with families. At the middle- and high-school levels, the task gets more difficult as teachers have to deal with more students and often have less support in their effort to reach out to parents. Periodic training on concrete ways in which teachers can get parents more involved in their children's education would help support teachers' efforts. Additionally, encouraging coordination and cooperation among teachers at each grade level will not only give teachers more support but will also provide collaborating educators with a fuller picture of each student's progress.
- *Focus on nonacademic involvement.* Increasingly difficult academic material can be a barrier to parents getting involved in their children's homework and studying. However, schools can provide parents with strategies for helping their children in other supportive ways. For example, by informing parents of resources that provide free homework help

and tutoring services, schools can help parents help their children overcome difficulty with schoolwork. Suggestions for encouraging effective study and homework habits can also help parents support students. Additionally, when schools provide parents with guidance on discussing with their adolescents important issues such as peer pressure, drugs, and the importance of education, parents can better support their children's success in school and in life. Because many parents feel ill-equipped to deal with these difficult topics, they would welcome such guidance.

School–family partnerships continue to be important throughout middle and high school, and, if implemented systematically, they can provide a solid support network for the academic, emotional, and social development of all students. More effort and attention in both the research and practice domains is necessary to develop and implement effective strategies. With systematic and coordinated efforts, schools and families can work together to promote the academic, social, and emotional success of all adolescents.

References

Baker, A. J. L. (2001). Improving parent involvement programs and practice: A qualitative study of parent perceptions. In S. Redding & L. G. Thomas (Eds.), *The community of the school* (pp. 127–154). Lincoln, IL: Academic Development Institute.

Balli, S. J. (1998). When mom and dad help: Student reflections on parent involvement with homework. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 31,* 142–146.

Balli, S. J., Demo, D. H., & Wedman, J. F. (1998). Family involvement with children's homework: An intervention in the middle grades. *Family Relations, 47,* 149–157.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). Contexts of child rearing: Problems and prospects. *American Psychologist, 34,* 844–850.

Bulach, B. M., Malone, B., & Castleman, C. (1995). An investigation of variables related to student achievement. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher, 8*(2), 23–29.

Dauber, S., & Epstein, J. L. (1993). Parent attitudes and practices of involvement in inner-city elementary and middle schools. In N. F. Chavkin (Ed.), *Families and schools in a pluralistic society* (pp. 53–71). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Desimone, L. (1999). Linking parent involvement with student achievement: Do race and income matter? *The Journal of Educational Research, 93*(1), 11–30.

Eccles, J. S. (1999). The development of children ages 6 to 14. *The Future of Children, 9*(2), 30–44.

Eccles, J. S., & Harold, R. D. (1993). Parent–school involvement during the early adolescent years. *Teachers College Record, 94,* 568–587.

Elias, M. J., Tobias, S. E., & Friedlander, B. S. (2000). *Raising emotionally intelligent teenagers: Parenting with love, laughter, and limits.* New York: Harmony Books.

Epstein, J. L. (1984). School policy and parent involvement: Research results. *Educational Horizons, 62*(2), 70–72.

Epstein, J. L. (1986). *Toward an integrated theory of school and family connections* (Report No. 3

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

from the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools). Baltimore: Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools.

Epstein, J. L. (1991). Effects on student achievement of teachers' practices of parent involvement. *Advances in reading/language research, 5,* 261–276.

Epstein, J. L. (1992). *TIPS: Teachers involve parents in schoolwork. Language arts and science/health interactive homework in the middle grades. Manual for teachers.* Baltimore: Center on Families, Communities, Schools, and Children's Learning.

Epstein, J. L. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan, 76*(9), 701–712.

Epstein, J. L., & Lee, S. (1995). National patterns of school and family connections in the middle grades. In B. A. Ryan, G. R. Adams, T. P. Gullotta, R. P. Weissberg, & R. L. Hampton (Eds.), *The family–school connection* (pp. 108–154). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Freedman-Doan, C. R., Arbreton, A. J. A., Harold, R. D., & Eccles, J. S. (1993). Looking forward to adolescence: Mothers' and fathers' expectations for affective and behavioral change. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 13*(4), 472–502.

Grolnick, W. S., Benjet, C., Kurowski, C. O., & Apostoleris, N. H. (1997). *Predictors of parent involvement in children's schooling. Journal of Educational Psychology, 89*(3), 538–548.

Henderson, A. T., & Berla, N. (1994). *A new generation of evidence: The family is critical to student achievement.* Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education.

Hickman, C. W., Greenwood, G., & Miller, M. D. (1995). High school parent involvement: Relationships with achievement, grade level, SES, and gender. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 28*(3), 125–134.

Ho Sui-Chi, E., & Willms, D. J. (1996). Effects of parental involvement on eight-grade achievement. *Sociology of Education, 69,* 126–141.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Bassler, O. C., & Brissie, J. S. (1987). Parent involvement: Contributions of teacher efficacy, socioeconomic status, and other school characteristics. *American Educational Research Journal, 24,* 417–435.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., Bassler, O. C., & Brissie, J. S. (1992). Explorations in parent–school relations. *Journal of Educational Research, 85,* 287–294.

Hoover-Dempsey, K .V., & Jones, K. P. (1997, March). *Parental role construction and parental involvement in children's education.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Education Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1995). Parental involvement in children's education: Why does it make a difference? *Teachers College Record, 97*(2), 310–331.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. V., & Sandler, H. M. (1997). Why do parents become involved in their children's education? *Review of Educational Research, 67*(1), 3–42.

Keith, T. Z., Keith, P. B., Sperduto, J., Santillo, S., & Killings, S. (1998). Longitudinal effects of parent involvement on high school grades: Similarities and differences across gender and ethnic groups. *Journal of School Psychology, 36*(3), 335–363.

McDonald, L., Billingham, S., Conrad, T., Morgan, A., O. N., & Payton, E. (1997). Families and schools together (FAST): Integrating community development with clinical strategies. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services, 2,* 140–155.

McNeal, R. B. (1999). Parental involvement as social capital: Differential effectiveness on science achievement, truancy, and dropping out. *Social Forces, 78*(1), 117–144.

Patrikakou, E. N. (1997). A model of parental attitudes and the academic achievement of adolescents. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 31*(1), 7–26.

Patrikakou, E. N., & Weissberg, R. P. (2000). Parents' perceptions of teacher outreach and parent involvement in children's education. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community, 20,* 103–119.

Pelco, L. E., & Ries, R. R. (1999). Teachers' attitudes and behaviors towards family–school partnerships: What school psychologists need to know. *School Psychology International, 20*(3), 265–277.

Perkins, P. G., & Milgram, R. M. (1996). Parent involvement in homework: A double-edged sword. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 6,* 195–203.

Salinas, K. C., & Jansorn, N. R. (Eds.). (2000). *Promising partnership practices 2000.* Baltimore: National Network of Partnership Schools.

Sanders, M. G., & Epstein, J. L. (2000). Building school–family–community partnerships in middle and high schools. In M. G. Sanders (Ed.), *Schooling students placed at risk* (pp. 339–361). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Thorkildsen, R., & Stein, M. R. S. (1998). Is parent involvement related to student achievement? Exploring the evidence. *Research Bulletin of the Phi Delta Kappa Center for Evaluation, Development, and Research, 22,* 17–20.

Walberg, H. J. (1984a). Families as partners in educational productivity. *Phi Delta Kappan, 65*(6), 397–400.

Walberg, H. J. (1984b). Improving the productivity of America's schools. *Educational Leadership, 41*(8), 19–30.

Zill, N., & Nord, C. W. (1994). *Running in place: How American families are faring in a changing economy and an individualistic society.* Washington, DC: Child Trends.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

☐ This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

☐ This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").